



# County of Los Angeles **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

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March 13, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair  
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From: David E. Janssen  
Chief Administrative Officer

## **CLOSURE OF KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION CAFETERIA**

As you are aware, on Tuesday, February 25, at approximately 11:15 a.m., the Health Department ordered a 48-hour closure of the cafeteria after finding evidence of vermin infestation within the premises. The department's inspection was prompted by a telephone complaint from someone in the building. This incident was reported in the Los Angeles Times and Daily News the following morning. Just a few days earlier, on February 20, the Health Department following a routine inspection had awarded the concessionaire, P&A Food Systems Inc. (P&A) an "A" rating with a score of 98 out of a possible 100 points.

Following this development, our office conducted an investigation to determine the cause and magnitude of the problem so that a corrective action plan could be put in motion. Our preliminary findings at this time are as follows:

Discussions and review of P&A records indicate that this problem was first identified late last year and reported to the Executive Office's building management. P&A immediately increased the frequency of extermination services from once a month to bi-weekly, and the Executive Office retained P&A's contractor, Terminix, to also provide service to those outside areas of the building where it was believed access by rodents would be possible, particularly the loading dock area which is typically left open for night deliveries. In addition, the Executive Office contacted the Health Department's Vector Control Program to review the situation and implement corrective action. A perimeter was established and bait stations were then placed in the exterior of the building, mall, and planter areas.

This treatment has proved to be somewhat successful as many of the bait stations placed around the targeted areas accomplished the intended purpose. We have found, however, that the level of response and actions taken underestimated the seriousness and extent of the problem. Discussions with Terminix and information received from the Health Department indicate the Vector situation is endemic to the Civic Center and confirmed this is not just a concessionaire/cafeteria problem but more of a building problem, since rodents have been seen out in the mall, in the storm drains, loading dock, trash compactor, sub-basement and other building areas and that a strategy to seal all possible points of entry first into the building and then into the cafeteria needed to be pursued.

In a report to P&A by Terminix dated February 3, specific entry points to the cafeteria were identified and recommended that they be sealed off. P&A stated that they immediately delivered a copy of this to the Executive Office. This work was not initiated until the day of the Health Department inspection, at which time these particular potential entry points were sealed off by ISD's building maintenance personnel.

The Health Department, after the follow up inspection on February 27, re-instated P&A's "A" rating and the cafeteria opened for lunch immediately thereafter. We do not believe, however, that this is the end of the problem, as there have been rodents sighted from time to time over the years in the building. Accordingly, a top to bottom inspection of the entire building is necessary. In addition, CAO staff, in collaboration with the Executive Office and ISD personnel, will take measures to re-evaluate and step up the Vector Program to include the entire perimeter of the building, mall grounds, planters, and underground tunnels.

We have been advised that earth moving connected with construction projects tends to displace and shift these rodent populations from one place to another. This was the case for several years during construction of the Cathedral. Hence, when the Grand Avenue re-alignment project gets underway, it is prudent to intensify extermination efforts at the Hall, and to inspect and assess other County buildings in the Civic Center. Our office will monitor these activities.

To assure coordination and a timely response, we have also instructed P&A to include the CAO in the future in all communications to the Executive Office so that a second level of review of indicated action items with respect to the cafeteria can be implemented. In addition, the CAO will convene a working group of involved departments and vendors to develop a long-term plan to address the problem at the Hall of Administration and the County's other Civic Center facilities.

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As a precautionary step, on March 5, we directed P&A to close the cafeteria. Additionally, we have requested ISD to move the stoves and other equipment for cleaning and to further evaluate if additional repairs and/or modifications are needed or if there is further evidence of infestation behind the appliances. We anticipate that the cafeteria will re-open on Monday, March 17.

We will continue to monitor this situation and keep your Board apprised of any significant developments. If you have further questions in this matter, please contact Sharon Yonashiro of my staff at (213) 974-2273.

DEJ:SNY  
CWW:CB:pe

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Internal Services Department  
P&A Food Systems Inc.